



GROUND COVER

NEWS AND SOLUTIONS FROM THE GROUND UP

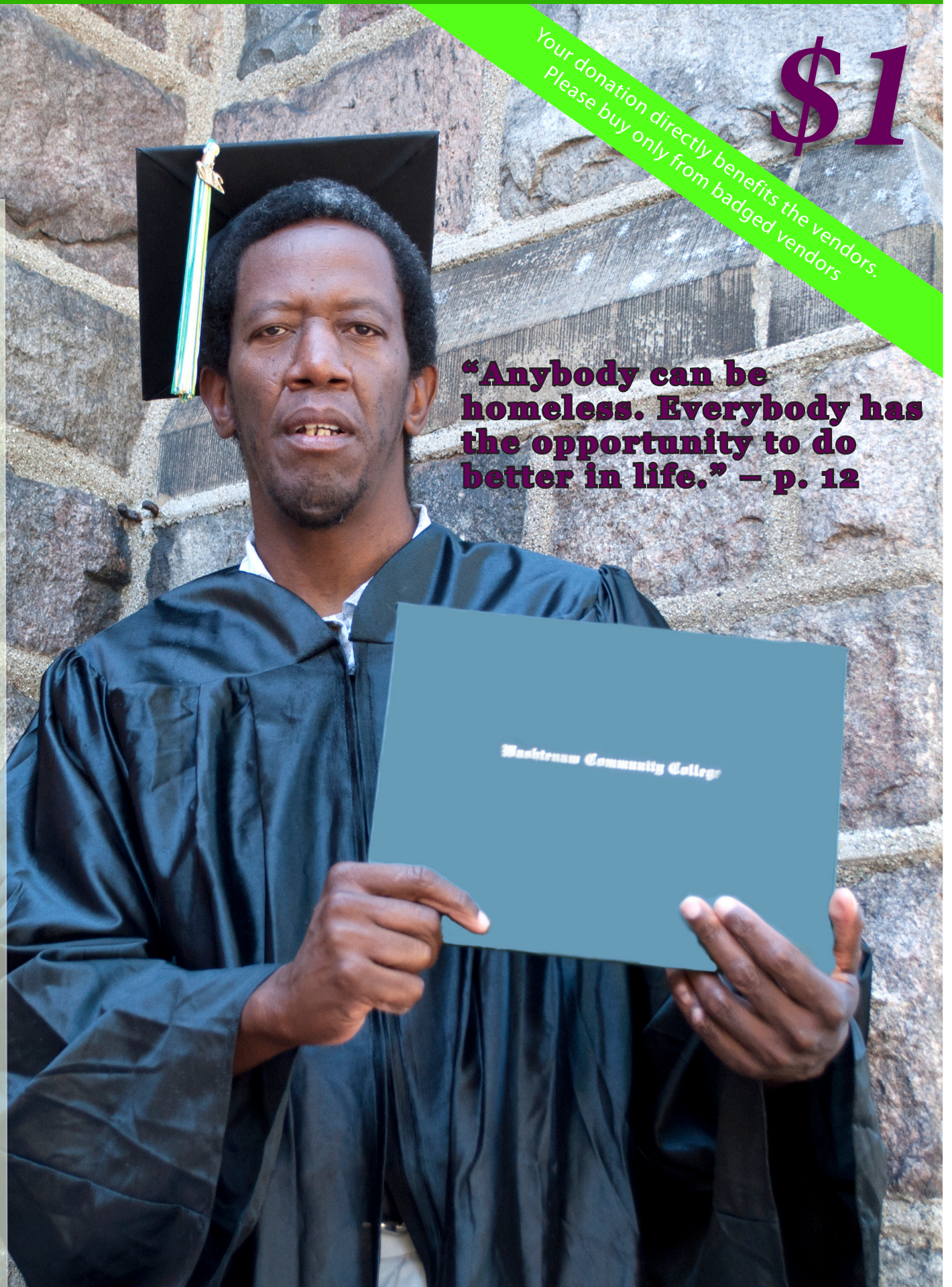
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A great place to live



by Susan Beckett
Publisher

We live in such a special community. It often takes leaving it to really appreciate what we've got. As I finished my last meal in Washington, D.C.'s Union Station earlier this summer, a well-spoken man in his early 60s approached my table and asked if there was any uneaten food left. I looked at my plate and under the napkin and olive pits were the remains of my moussaka – about four forkfuls of ground meat.

Somewhat automatically, I replied, "It's just a little bit of hamburger."

"I don't care," he said. "I'll take anything."

Before I could react, he furtively looked around then swooped up the plate and alighted at a nearby table where he separated the trash from the food and wolfed down my leftovers with my fork. It just about broke my heart. When I later went to his table and gave him a little money for buying some more food, he responded as if no one had ever done so before. I had earlier witnessed a much younger man passing the outside of an eatery and reaching over to an abandoned plate to grab the remains of a hot dog, which he quickly popped into his mouth. Hunger is clearly a pervasive problem in our nation's capitol.


Outside Union Station there was a man selling Street Sense, that city's street newspaper, and the D.C. Kitchen

prepares meals which are served through various social service agencies. But it appears that they don't have a place like the Community Kitchen at the Delonis Center or the Breakfast Program at St. Andrew's, where anyone can just come for a meal.

This lack is not confined to our nation's capitol. Just last month in Detroit I was approached by a man in a wheel chair asking for food; not money for food, just food.

The generosity of our Washtenaw County community allows everyone to eat with dignity and insulates us from witnessing extreme hunger and deprivation. That has real value to me,

allowing me to enjoy my own comfort. Experiencing the discomfort again, as I did in D.C., reminds me of one reason why we donate to food drives, staff food pantries and meal programs, and support these programs financially. Thank you for doing your part to make Washtenaw County a great place to live!



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As Eye C-It: No excuses allowed



by Rissa Haynes
Groundcover
Vendor

There will always be those who offer reasons why something can NOT be accomplished. While those people are explaining away their dreams and hopes, there is someone out there actually realizing those same hopes and dreams under similar circumstances. The paralysis of over-analysis causes some to abandon their dreams and hopes and drift into a state of stagnation. Having a type of "Peter Pan" existence – the "I don't want to grow up" syndrome – they resign themselves to just having a good time and never decide to trust the new way of living. Others look at their difficulties and decide to take on the challenges and responsibilities of moving forward to realize worthwhile dreams and goals.

Following are examples of people who abandoned their homelessness and hopelessness to pursue their dreams in spite of their living situation.

Derwin Wallace could have used his analysis skills to finesse his way around the streets of Chicago. Instead, while living on the streets, he used his talent and energy to earn a bachelor's degree in accounting and a master's degree in business administration. Today, he is the Director of Corporate Investor Relations for the National Association of Investors Corporation.

Another example of success in spite of seemingly hopeless circumstances is Bill Jefferson, from Toledo, Ohio. He kicked a drug addiction and for 22 years has been clean. His journey included working as head chef at two five-star restaurants, The River Watch in Grand Haven and The Iris in Plainwell. Receiving high acclaims from restaurant patrons and culinary professionals alike, Bill successfully completed a 2-year culinary program in 18 months. How did he do it?

"It takes courage every day to trust in the Higher Power and choose the new way of living over the comforts of doing the same old things," Bill said, adding that he had to overcome himself. "I had to realize that some things were killing me. One was drugs; other things include lack of self-respect, self-love, respect for life and responsibility."

After embracing the truth, Bill accepted the support that began to flow toward him and allowed the support systems to do what they were designed to do. Finally, he moved past resentments, forgiving himself and others for past hurts.

Recently, St. Luke's Lutheran Church conducted a ceremony to honor several people in the Washtenaw County area who have gone from homelessness to two or more years of "home-fullness" and have saved cash for emergencies in a bank account.

Henry Ford once said, "If you think you can, you're right: YOU CAN! If you think you can't, you're also right." Choose to go after your worthwhile dreams and goals in spite of your current situation.

GROUNDCOVER MISSION:

Groundcover News exists to create opportunity and a voice for low-income people while taking action to end homelessness and poverty.

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The mirror matter



by Rev. Dr.
Martha Brunell
Pastor, Bethlehem
United Church of
Christ

My daughter Molly and I were in a shoe store together. The store was in Chicago where she lives and works as a public school teacher. We had taken a break from running errands for her fall classroom setup. The store we were at carries a brand of shoes with the promise that each pair of shoes you buy will be matched with the donation of a pair of shoes to a child in need. I hoped that promise was true.

Most shoe stores where I have shopped have small mirrors on the floor that focus on your foot and the shoes in question. This store had large, full length mirrors with bright, harsh

lighting. They were the kind of mirrors that intimidate many of us with a sense that something is wrong and that we don't look as well as we could. Molly and I both bought shoes and we both admitted that we came away from the mirrors with a diminished sense of ourselves. The size, lighting, and angle of a mirror can be tricky, and the reflection we see not all that helpful.

Leaving the shoe store, the old line of a fairy tale came into my head: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who's the fairest of them all?" As the frightened, aging queen looked in that tale's mirror, only one person could be the fairest of them all. And when the mirror offered up a reflection of the young Snow White and not the queen, bad trouble was afoot. The queen had to figure out how to rid herself and the land of her rival in the mirror.

In our culture that favors and idolizes

certain body types over others, it is not uncommon to either disregard your worth based on what you see in the mirror or to compete with everything around you to have a better mirror image than anyone else. Several days after our run-in with the shoe store mirrors, I discovered these words from contemporary Sufi teacher Sherif Baba. They have a different perspective to offer.

If you look at every human being as a Divine mirror, you will know yourself and understand life.

I can only imagine what a different world it would be if we regarded every human being, ourselves included, as a Divine mirror. Sherif Baba's wise words remind me of the Judeo-Christian affirmation of Genesis that we are all created in the image and likeness of God.

It seems to me that the diverse Groundcover News community could be an excellent place for us to commit to one another that we will look at each other, really look at each other. In that looking, we will expect a reflection of goodness, guidance, and grounding that are greater than we are individually. We can mirror back to one another the giftedness we glimpse in the other. Our practice could be to increase awareness about when we hold up a judging mirror in which others are likely to catch a negative self-image. This practice could be an opportunity for our joyful and sacred reflection of one before us. Then, an old line from a familiar fairy tale would need revision: "Mirror, mirror on the wall, who is the one before me now? What wonder and grace do I behold in him or her?" And with Sherif Baba we will know ourselves and understand life a bit better.



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Creating haves and have-nots?

Dear Editor,

The current presidential campaign seems most notable for its lack of optimism on either side. In sharp contrast to the '08 election, both parties seem to describe a nation of sharply limited personal and collective expectations. To whatever extent these conditions become seen as the "new normal," our future as a unified society will be short-changed. Our generation must not let America become a nation of haves and have-nots!

Paul Lambert

Meet James W., salesman extraordinaire

by Susan Beckett

James has been selling since the age of 18, when he left Ypsilanti for California and went door-to-door selling a cleaning product called Advantage. For seven years he traveled the United States and Mexico, moving product in all but six states and learning to stand on his own.

"I don't indulge in a lot of stuff like I did then," James reflected. "I learned the hard way not to pitch my money away on stupid stuff. I've matured a lot. It helped me to become a man, knowing that Mom is a thousand miles away and can't just come over and bail me out of a jam."

He eventually settled in North Carolina and worked for a data survey company, Neighborhood Solutions. James went door-to-door talking with residents about proposed changes in their neighborhoods and soliciting their opinions and feedback on how improvements should be made. He also sold the Winston-Salem Journal.

With all that experience, it's no surprise that James quickly became one of the top earners when he returned to Ypsilanti and began selling Groundcover. His stay here is temporary, as his jobs in North Carolina and his girlfriend and her children await his return.



James W. breaks sales records while bringing in new Groundcover customers.

James returned to Michigan at the request of his mother, who was in a car accident five years ago. Her health has been declining ever since. James came back early in 2010 to take care of her and make sure she was able to get to her medical appointments and get the treatment she needed.

He got a job selling windows when he first arrived but got laid off during the

recession. Selling Groundcover fits his experience, needs and personality. He sets his own hours so he can make his mom's needs his top priority and still pay for his own expenses and help his mom out. He's also saving to help with back-to-school expenses for his girlfriend's children.

James said about selling, "You have people who are familiar and some

who are unfamiliar with Groundcover. I like running into those who are unfamiliar. I can get the word out that Groundcover is about real-life stuff and talks about important issues like poverty. I think people around here are proud of their community and want to know what is going on here.

"A couple of people have come back and actually thanked me, because it's a good paper and they never would have found it if I hadn't taken the time to tell them about it. It's also an opportunity to help people have a better day. Maybe I can say something that will spark them, or they will say something so I'll have a better day!"

"People aren't as mean as Americans perceive them to be. There are a lot of nice, kind-hearted people out there, from young to old. I sell to teenagers, too," said James.

The health of James' mother is improving and he hopes to be back in North Carolina by the end of the year, though Ypsilanti will always be his home, too. He and his mom are starting a T-shirt business. James took a silk screen printing course a few years back and intends to print the shirts in North Carolina, but the headquarters might well be in Ypsilanti. If James is doing the selling, we know those T-shirts will go fast!

Book review: ONE PAGE AT A TIME—Getting through college with ADHD

by Phill Pappas
c. 2010 Phill Pappas

by Susan Beckett

This frank revelation of common pitfalls and strategies to avoid them for students with attention deficit and hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) comes from Phill Pappas, born and raised in Ann Arbor. Pappas spent six and a half years at Michigan State University, unwittingly researching this book as he struggled toward graduation, which he ultimately accomplished with all A's in his final semester.

He succeeds in presenting useful and easy-to-apprehend suggestions for organizing and structuring a successful student life. Determined to avoid a ponderous academic tome, this 79-page book meets his self-proclaimed intention of "speaking for us." He intersperses his self-reflective narrative with colorful adjectives, including some expletives, and diversions into the fascinating lives of ninjas.



You can start reading at any random point and feel immediately engaged without the need for previous context. However, I strongly recommend reading the beginning so you get a sense of the author and a taste of his sense of humor.

The body of the book includes sage advice like, "If you do not think you'll go, do not take the class." Factors

involved in choosing courses might include the time at which the class is offered, the location, its length, and the teaching style of the presenter.

Pragmatic suggestions on organizing living and work spaces, evaluating medicines and developing effective routines are interspersed with accounts from Pappas' own life that detail his transitions from chaos to order. One of my favorites applies far beyond the ADHD crowd:

*Start simple.
I bought a good laundry basket my third year of college. It was big enough to hold about two weeks of clothes, it was durable, and it fit in my closet.
I made an effort to put dirty clothes directly into the basket in my closet, and then I would close the closet door. The clothes were now out of sight and mind. After a few days, I didn't have any*

*clothes on the floor, on my desk chair, or on my bed. My room felt cleaner.
Get a good laundry basket.
You only want clothes in your dresser, closet, laundry basket, and on your body.*

The book is replete with personal accounts, many of which are hilarious. Don't miss the diatribe on Power Point slides. It is easy to read and relate to, even if you don't have personal experience with ADHD. Valuable insights lie within for parents, teachers, siblings and friends, and for any student struggling with the transition from one level of school to the next.

Unfortunately, the Ann Arbor Public Library does not have *One Page at a Time*, but the book is available at Nicola's Books and through Amazon, and excerpts are being used by the University of Michigan as a resource for students with disabilities.

Small is Beautiful: Rose's Good Company

by Leonore Gerstein
Groundcover Contributor

During my first meeting with Rose Martin and two of her assistants, the phone rang. Frank R. was calling from prison. Smiles and banter, tokens of love and comradeship beamed back and forth between the three in the room and the caller, a sixty-something inmate eager to join Rose's Good Company (RGC) so that he, too, can reach out to the neediest in society, especially to youth at risk.

For Martin and her staff no task feels more urgent than getting life-sentence commutations for three special inmates, among them the caller Frank R. These men have been accepted as clients thanks to the informal investigation members of her staff started while they themselves were still in prison. We look for people who "are not users" of other inmates, people who "want to help themselves," according to John U., RGC administrator. "We pick you, you don't pick us," says Martin.

Selectivity is a partial explanation of RGC's success rate. Ed S., another former client and current volunteer, says, "We have only 3 percent recidivism" as compared with the 32 percent rate within the post-prison population as a whole. The other factor ensuring success is the range, quality and intensity of the services RGC provides its clients.

Rose's Good Company's mission is, "To serve individuals and families who have lost hope... It is RGC's goal and purpose to provide a light where there is none." First and foremost, says Martin, "Trust every person until (s)he gives you reason not to."

Then, give what a person wants and what his or her human dignity demands, not what you think (s)he should have. "Know that you are loved and cared for," is the message RGC wants to convey to clients with every intervention. "It's like family," say several volunteers. As such, one might add, Martin is the family's wise, vigilant mother.

You may wonder about the decidedly original name of this small-is-beautiful agency. Chosen by the clients themselves, it reflects the idea that Rose Martin makes all the good work happen and also alludes to one of the truths she teaches: if you seek out good company and are good company for others, and you will gain the strength to make good choices and repair your life.

RGC has 38 volunteers, among them 6 women and 27 former prison inmates.



Left to right: John Ulmer (released 4 years ago), Beverly Tuttle (released 2 days ago), Rose Martin, working to get more good people like these released from prison, and Dante Ferrazza (released 4 years ago).

The need for assistance is huge and growing, says Martin, who would like to see RGC expand to meet that need. To date, RGC's Michigan non-profit tax-exempt status has not generated the hoped-for funding. A handful of loyal donors provides its modest resources. Maybe times are hard for everyone, Rose muses, or maybe people have just stopped caring. "This has got to change," she stresses.

Every RGC volunteer has made the transition from being rescued to being a rescuer. Only someone who "has been there" has the credibility needed to help former offenders and reach kids who have no role positive models, said John U., who sat in prison for 37 years and at present serves as volunteer administrator. John believes that his direct contact with some of these young people will continue "forever." Taking advantage of the prison's law library and educational opportunities (now curtailed), he earned two Bachelor degrees and a paralegal certificate. Still, he has found it impossible to get a job. At RGC, he responds to calls from clients day and night. Recent emergency tasks included delivering medicine, removing a client from a bad situation, and finding emergency housing for a single parent with three children.

More often than not, neither family nor

neighborhood can contribute to a client's rehabilitation. Thus, it's up to RGC to replace them and provide individualized programs that keep people focused on their goals. This entails constant outreach. Like most volunteers, John "make(s) the rounds" daily, proactively visiting clients he has not heard from in two days. This task is a big part of Rose Martin's job a well. When there's a lull in calls from clients and the "rounds" are all done, John places himself where teen boys and young men congregate. He feels that this degree of commitment combined with guidance drawn from his tumultuous life experience is what severely disadvantaged youth need.

Giving transforms the giver, says Alan, who also benefitted from Rose Martin's support. At one point, Alan needed more than just counseling. While he rebuilt a car for a young woman whose job depended on wheels, Martin stayed by his side in the junk yard for all five days, just in case he needed her to drive to a parts store.

Caring, individualized attention works, says, Martin, and almost by definition, this is what larger programs, such as the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative (MPRI) have trouble providing. Parole officers in Washtenaw County acknowledge this *de facto* by frequently referring parolees to RGC.

Martin's supporters in Washtenaw County are making it possible for RGC to provide free housing for ex-inmates and the homeless in one of six "Three-Quarters-of-the-Way" houses. Residents stay for up to six months. The dignity with which RGC treats its clients encourages their strengths. Food is provided in the form of cash or cash equivalents rather than pre-packaged pantry donations. This ensures that a family will eat what it likes and encourages true family mealtimes. The same holds true for clothing. Other services include counseling, help with employment (always a challenge after prison), transportation, and substance abuse recovery support.

Admiration and gratitude for her work was the theme-song of this reporter's conversations with Rose's staff. Dante ("Fuzz") F., former inmate and present volunteer, credits her support with setting his post-release life on the right track. He describes the deep fears and insecurities ex-prisoners experience as they reenter a changed and often inhospitable world. Fuzz was released four years ago after a 40-year incarceration which deprived him of his autonomy and decision-making skills. He benefitted from the Michigan Prisoner Reentry Initiative but needed more support than that program could offer. Now that his life is stable, he gives back by staying in close touch with 25 recently released inmates.

A visit to Rose's Good Company's website, www.rosesgoodcompany.org, is a great way to learn more about RGC's work. Watch a wonderful video featuring Rose and former client Alan [search terms: Vimeo (yes, with an M)... Rose Martin]. You may reach Rose and RGC at 734-686-4143, or by email: elsieel@aol.com. Rose's Good Company welcomes the support of Groundcover readers. It urgently needs contributions to keep its good work going. And RGC implores concerned people to write personal letters to Governor R. Snyder asking him to meet with Martin. Such a dialogue will allow her to describe past successes and explain why and how she advocates for transformed felons who deserve sentence commutation.

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Thanks to GroundCover News for spreading the word and providing an outlet where there was none. We are proud to support your mission and good work!

Prayers for our Sikh neighbors

by Lee Alexander
Editor

It's happening with horrid regularity. Another mass shooting and no acceptable answers why. Violence is seeping into the most mundane aspects of American life. In July, 12 people were killed at a movie premier in Aurora, Colorado. It's pretty easy to imagine ourselves there. It seems particularly sinister when such a tragedy occurs in a house of worship, as on August 5 in Oak Creek, Wisconsin, a shooting which left six dead – although I wouldn't suggest that one mass murder is any worse than the next.

The first time I felt deeply touched by this certain sort of senselessness was during college in 2007. On an otherwise beautiful spring day, I was having my typical Monday morning. As I made my way across campus between classes, things suddenly felt peculiar. Something was different. Something had changed. Students' expressions were odd – stunned. Groups were pooling together, speaking in hushed tones. I had never before nor since seen every shred of gregariousness stripped from our campus. Nobody smiled. Even the new flowers appeared solemn.

As I was sitting through my just-finished mathematics lecture at a university north of Nashville, 32 students and professors were gunned down at Virginia Tech. My school



Sangeeta Kaur, a woman who wears a turban and a member of the Sikh congregation, explains Sikh history to a visitor at an educational poster session during the Open House at the Sikh gurudwara in Rochester Hills on Thursday, August 16.

and Virginia Tech truthfully weren't really that close geographically, but at that moment, time and space behaved strangely. It could have been my college. It could have been any school, anywhere. That was the impression that sticks with me even now. It was the unpredictable normality of it that stunned us.

The mass shootings in Wisconsin touched the Groundcover community. We have a high proportion of Sikh volunteers who put in untold hours at this newspaper. Last year, spontaneously, Angad showed up at our monthly volunteer meeting. After modestly introducing himself, he simply asked, "How can I help?" He has been a virtually indispensable fixture around Groundcover since.

As I do layout for the paper or work up a difficult image on my computer, Angad is who I call whenever the inevitable problems arise. Angad has brought many of his Sikh friends to Groundcover. At each new meeting he produces at least one new face. Like him, many become regular. Whether they stick around or move on, all without exception, have been warm and generous. I wonder if they view themselves as ambassadors of a religion and culture; their kindness has certainly helped to craft my impressions of Sikh faith. Before being seemingly adopted

by them, I had only vague notions of their religion. It's sad that the Sikh temple shooting is perhaps most Americans' first glimpse into their world.

I have a keen interest in world religions. Presently I strive to be a moderately serious student of Zen. I've always wanted to ask my Sikh friends more about their beliefs. It seems like whenever we're together there's always so much work to do; I never found the right opportunity to initiate that conversation. I regret it now.

Curiosity is the first step toward understanding. Take time to ask questions and learn. My friends are eager to share ideas about their cultural identity.

Hate comes from a superficial understanding of human nature. If we look deeply we find that despite outward appearances, the human experience is pretty much the same around the world. When we educate ourselves about another ethos, if we approach things from a right view, we're in fact just learning more about who we are fundamentally.

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Moving forward: reflections from a Sikh after the Oak Creek shooting

by Harleen Kaur
Groundcover Contributor

"A senseless act of violence." That's the term often used in the media to describe the shootings in Oak Creek, Wisconsin and Aurora, Colorado. This begs the question: what act of violence has sense to it?

On August 5, 2012, a man overcome with hate went into a *gurudwara* (Sikh house of worship) as members were preparing for the service that day. He mercilessly killed and injured others before killing himself when he saw there was no way out. His actions captivated the nation and the media, but there was still a sense of distance between the Sikh community and America as President Obama called Sikhs "a part of [the] broader American family."

The days after the shooting were hectic for the Sikh community. The day after the attack, there was a vigil held locally in Madison Heights, Michigan. On the same Wednesday, there was a National Day of Solidarity and Remembrance where *gurudwaras* nationwide organized vigils and prayer services to support their brothers and sisters in



Japman Kaur leading the congregation in the Ardaas, a prayer to God, at the Sikh *gurudwara* during the Rochester Hills vigil.

Oak Creek. These vigils were packed to capacity with members of not only the Sikh community, but every community. People from all around came to offer their words of support and extend their hands to help with whatever was needed. The Sikh community may have lost six members, but the response that we received from our neighbors,

friends, and even strangers showed that America lost six citizens as well.

Although we cannot bring back those who lost their lives on August 5, we can move forward as a community with understanding and compassion. We can exhibit the fine character of Lt. Brian Murphy, who suffered eight

bullet wounds in his efforts to protect his fellow Americans in the *gurudwara*. We can embody the passion that the Oak Creek community had as they rushed in four days after the shooting to repair the tarnished *gurudwara*. Most of all, we can use the diversity of our community to our advantage as we work together to make it a safer and more accepting place for everyone, not just for Sikhs.

As Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. said, "Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot

drive out hate; only love can do that." The circumstances following such a tragic attack are not ideal, but we can learn from what happened in Oak Creek to cultivate the diversity of our community and become stronger. Together, we can move forward with love, not hate.



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Fill in the squares so that each row, column, and 3-by-3 box contain the numbers 1 through 9.

ACROSS

1. 1978 novel by Joan Barfoot
5. Middle school (abbr.)
8. Return to initial state
13. Objective
14. Lure
15. Sheeplike
16. Small amount
17. Jason's ship
18. Sea diver's sickness
19. Mix
20. Actor Bert
21. French seaport
22. Followed by 54-A, a famous inventor
24. Existed
26. Tibetan priest
28. Purchase request
32. Humiliate
36. Yes votes
38. Russian mountain range
40. Followed by 6-D, any of several California roads
42. Followed by 40-A, a paper manufacturing company
44. Paradise
45. Metric prefix
47. Furry
48. Clay
50. Comedic actor Eric
52. Type of acid
54. Followed by 42-A, a small southern city
59. M*A*S*H character
63. Backyard structure
65. Hair pests
66. Famous battle site
67. Vocalized
68. Thought
69. Trick
70. Encourage
71. Winged
72. Wails
73. The Begleys
74. Animal homes

DOWN

1. Put to pasture
2. Cubicle
3. Fraction
4. Fear
5. Paraguayan president Albino
6. Followed by 8-D, a bandit
7. Put away

Word Chain

1	2	3	4			5	6	7		8	9	10	11	12
13					14					15				
16					17					18				
19					20					21				
22				23			24		25					
				26		27			28		29	30	31	
32	33	34	35			36		37			38			39
40					41			42		43				
44					45		46			47				
	48			49			50		51					
				52		53			54		55	56	57	58
59	60	61	62			63		64			65			
66						67					68			
69						70					71			
72						73					74			

8. Followed by 49-D, capitalism abusers of the 19th century
9. Eternally
10. Trigonometric function
11. Odds and ____
12. Try out
14. Wood
23. Computer programming language
25. Flower
27. Bludgeon
29. Spanish coin
30. So
31. Horizontal rod
32. Mimic
33. Smartphone operating system
34. Passed an exam
35. Chinese (prefix)
37. Obsolete interjection
39. Put down

41. Object
43. Was indebted
46. Followed by 22-A, portrayer of John-Boy Walton
49. Oklahoma City minor league hockey club
51. Exterior sill
53. Produce
55. Tale of Troy
56. Move furtively
57. Indian, for example
58. Closes in
59. Pool player's need
60. American ____; century plant
61. Stupefy
62. The last word
64. These symbols: ηηη

Puzzle by Jeff Richmond

Cryptoquote

EXURGPIVR BOZUBRM IX UPVT XY VXOOBEORIE EX

XIR'M XHI KRUBRYM.

GPEJRG BE VXICROIM EJR XZZGRMMBXI XG ZRGM-

RVNEBXI XY XEJRGM.

--SXJI Y. TRIIRCW

Hint: Y = F

Solutions on page 11

Groundcover Vendor Code

While Groundcover News is a nonprofit organization and newspaper vendors are considered contracted self-employers, we still have expectations of how vendors should conduct themselves while selling and representing the paper.

The following list is our Vendor Code of Conduct, which every vendor reads and signs before receiving a badge and papers. We request that if you discover a vendor violating any tenets of the Code, please contact us and provide as many details as possible. Our paper and our vendors should be positively impacting our County.

All vendors must agree to the following code of conduct:

- Groundcover News will be distributed for a voluntary donation of \$1. I agree not to ask for more than a dollar or solicit donations by any other means.
- I will only sell current issues of Groundcover News.
- I agree not to sell additional goods or products when selling the paper or to panhandle, including panhandling with only one paper.
- I will wear and display my badge when selling papers.
- I will only purchase the paper from Groundcover News Staff and will not sell to or buy papers from other Groundcov-

er News vendors, especially vendors who have been suspended or terminated.

- I agree to treat all customers, staff and other vendors respectfully. I will not "hard sell," threaten, harass or pressure customers, staff, or other vendors verbally or physically.
- I will not sell Groundcover News under the influence of drugs or alcohol.
- I understand that I am not a legal employee of Groundcover News but a contracted worker responsible for my own well-being and income.
- I understand that my badge is property of Groundcover News and will not deface it. I will present my badge when purchasing the papers.
- I agree to stay off private property when selling Groundcover News.
- I understand to refrain from selling on public buses, federal property or stores unless there is permission from the owner.
- I agree to stay at least one block away from another vendor. I will also abide by the Vendor corner policy.

If you see any Groundcover News vendors not abiding by the code of conduct, please report the activity to: contact@groundcovernews.com 734-972-0926

SEPTEMBER CALENDAR OF EVENTS

September 1-3 – Annual Great Green Recycling Yard Sale, 9 a.m. - 5 p.m. (Sat, Mon) / 12-5 p.m. (Sun). Popular event offering up quality used furniture and household items collected and refurbished by members of the Zen Buddhist Temple. Zen Buddhist Temple, 1214 Packard Streed, Ann Arbor. More info: annarbor@zenbuddhisttemple.org, or call (734) 761-6520.

September 1-30 – Hunger Action Month. Over 200 food banks belonging to the Feeding America network unite to urge individuals to take action in their communities and simply Speak Out Against Hunger this September. More info: www.hungeractionmonth.org.

September 8 – 5th Annual HomeGrown Festival, 6-10 p.m. Event showcases a vibrant and sustainable local food system and seeks to strengthen community food security in Southeast Michigan. Sample cuisine and drinks prepared by chefs and brewers committed to cooking with seasonal, local ingredients. Live music and dancing, special activities for kids, silent auction, and artisan market. Kerrytown Farmers' Market Pavilion, 315 Detroit Street, Ann Arbor. More info: <http://homegrownfestival.org>, or call (734) 904-5384.

October 2-Groundcover Volunteer Meeting 7-8:30 p.m. Help guide Groundcover's future. Bethlehem UCC Gallery Room, 423 S. 4th Ave, Ann Arbor. More info: contact@groundcovernews.com or call (734)972-0926.

September 9 – 10th Annual Kerrytown BookFest, all day. Celebrating those who create books and those who read them, the event highlights our area's rich heritage in the book and printing arts as well as local authors and organizations. Features speakers, exhibitions, and retail vendors. Kerrytown Farmers' Market Pavilion, 315 Detroit Street, Ann Arbor. More info: www.kerrytownbookfest.org.

September 15 – NAMI Michigan 2012 NAMIWalk, 10 a.m. (registration opens) / noon (walk begins). A 5K walk held at many locations across the U.S., the largest and most successful mental illness awareness event in the country aims to raise awareness about the stigmas surrounding mental illness, and to raise funds to help NAMI fight this stigma. Providence Park, Novi. More info: contact Bill Feiser at wfeiser@comcast.net or (734) 668-7391, or visit <http://namiwalks.nami.org/washtenawwalkers2012>.

Camp Take Notice – Where are they now?

by Greg Hoffman and Susan Beckett

Since being evicted from their Wagner Road site in late June, 25 of the approximately 68 former Camp Take Notice (CTN) residents have moved into traditional housing. It has been determined that 32 will not get government assistance for replacement housing for a variety of reasons, ranging from a lack of citizenship to having a current monthly income that exceeds guideline limits. There are still approximately 33 of the dedicated Michigan State Housing Development Authority (MSHDA) year-long housing vouchers available, but it has been challenging to find available housing units and landlords willing to accept the vouchers and some of the former campers. More than 30 of the former CTN residents are currently camping under bridges, at churches and at other clandestine locations around the county.

Speakers at a community meeting at the U-M School of Social Work on August 19 shed some light on this situation and why an itinerant camp is needed on an ongoing basis. Former camper Seth Best explained that as a person with non-traditional gender identification, he is unprotected from housing discrimination. His birth name does not match his gender identity. As he could not afford to have his name legally changed, landlords have rejected him because he is not able to “prove” who he is. Issues for other campers include bad credit histories, prison records, and mental and emotional conditions that make the prospect of living on their own too intimidating.

Brian Durrance, vice-president of MISSION, the tax-exempt non-profit that provides support to CTN, commented that people wrongly attribute homelessness to poverty. He asserted that once we recognize chronic homelessness as a problem of mental illness, untraditional sexual identity and exclusion, we can start to craft effective solutions. He noted that the current best-practice for dealing with mental health and substance abuse issues (which often co-exist), is to first get people into permanent housing and then deal with the underlying issues. The shortage of permanent supportive housing in Washtenaw County is a sticking point in that model. The housing-first model *may* provide a locking door and a roof, but that isn't enough to be self-sufficient, according to Durrance. He calls it “a systemic brokenness in our system.”

“Homelessness ends with self-sufficiency. When you go with the

mainstream options, they may give you a room. But Camp Take Notice is a community-first model; we give you a family and a neighborhood. With community comes self-esteem and agency; with agency comes action,” said Durrance.

MISSION considers CTN to be a housing-first community where people can start dealing with their problems in a supportive setting. According to Durrance, CTN received *de facto* validation of their utility as between three and five people each week were referred to the camp by public agencies that could not help them in any other way, including area police departments and hospital emergency rooms. These referrals included a pregnant couple who had never before been homeless; he was a laid-off blue collar worker and she was in the late stages of pregnancy and neither could find work. Another was a deaf person speaking to them through an interpretive phone.

“When we turn away from this problem, these people cost us much more than when we turn toward the problem, explained CTN pioneer Caleb Poirier. Even those campers who got evicted from Camp Take Notice, when they were with us, they were not stressing the system with 911 calls and emergency room visits. Just as the causes of homelessness are heterogeneous, the interventions for homelessness need to be, too.”

Durrance related the stories of several former campers who used their time at CTN to deal with issues that had been holding them back. One was a man with serious anxiety issues who had been unhoused for many years. After living in the camp for six months, he came to Peggy Lynch, MISSION board member and self-proclaimed hospitality queen, and told her he wanted to end his alcohol addiction. He was ready to enter a program but feared that his anxiety disorder would re-emerge and thwart him. Peggy stayed with him through the entire 15 hour intake, accompanied some of that time by Durrance, until the camper was safely admitted into the program. He is

now substance-free and self-sufficient without any public assistance, working for his former employer.

Durrance claimed that CTN played an essential role in building the man's self-esteem, trust, and sense of belonging to a community. He sees a further role for the camp and MISSION in helping people resolve their legal problems, restore their driver's licenses and reconcile with agencies.

Rob Turner, County Commissioner from District 1 in which CTN was last situated, was the only politician from the governor on down to accept the invitation to attend the meeting. He stated that the County Commissioners consider maintaining the safety net one of their top priorities and suggested Community Development director Mary Jo Callan might be able to help MISSION in their quest to find a permanent site for the camp.

“There's a lot we can do if you work with us,” Turner said. “Please come meet with us.”

Turner voiced some frustration with the State “kicking the can” down to local government by curtailing state financial support. He said that they are eliminating revenue sharing and the phase-out of the personal property tax will lead to a continuing diminishment of funds available at the local level. Alan Haber suggested from the audience that future Greenway land at 421 N. Main might be a viable temporary site for Camp Take Notice.

Bob Weber, a member of the Senior



Advisory Council, commented from the audience, “There's always going to be people who are one paycheck away from homelessness.” He noted that one-third of Michigan's residents over the age of 50 live on Social Security alone and that the situation is particularly dire for those who become unemployed but are too young to receive Social Security.

Durrance followed that up, noting “In the summer our population is young but in the winter, the folks who can't travel south, they're old.”

In response to an audience member's request for a call to action, speakers identified three domains in which the public can be of assistance. The first is helping to support and relocate the camp by discovering and securing possible locations for at least three months at a time and letting politicians know there is public support for the Camp's continued presence. The second is helping those campers who are now housed with furnishing those places with basic necessities. They can be donated to Cathi King, pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Ann Arbor, as can bus tokens to help people get from their housing to essential services and reconnect with community. Third, people can work with Durrance and Poirier to continue locating and providing humanitarian support to homeless individuals throughout Washtenaw County.

Those wishing to help or those in need of help can contact Brian Durrance at (734) 216-6166. Financial contributions can be made to Reverend Cathi King or at www.tentcitymichigan.org.

Keeping up: reflections on the electronic age

by Martin Stolzenberg
Groundcover Contributor

I'm old – going to be 77 on my next birthday. The statistics say I can expect to live roughly another ten years. I think I can keep it going for maybe fifteen or twenty more years.

Recently I read that in 1829, Martin Van Buren, then governor of New York, wrote to President Andrew Jackson asking him to help preserve the canal waterway system of our country against the inroads of the railroads.

A contemporary wrote that "Railroad carriages are pulled at the enormous speed of 15 miles an hour. The Almighty certainly never intended people should travel at such breakneck speed."

I don't want to be another Van Buren. But it isn't easy. I just keep fumbling around doing the best I can; sometimes not even understanding what I am doing, but trying to swim with the current.

Up-to-date-me can be found on Facebook. I understand many people have hundreds of "friends." They report daily on the most commonplace activities of their existence with those hundreds of nearest and dearest. Who cares?

I have all of 25 "friends." I share nothing with them. Does someone want to hear about my latest bout of hemorrhoids or that I walk from one room to another and then can't remember why I was going there to start with? Doubt it. I send no birthday greetings, and don't look to see who remembers mine.

I understand they are pushing toward one billion Facebook members. To me that is a lot of people who don't have anything better to do with their time.

I have an iPod, which is mostly used at the fitness center while on the elliptical trainer. I am able to download hundreds of tunes from my computer onto this tiny little gadget. This is good.

One day I couldn't get any sound on my iPod. I tried this and that, but couldn't get it going. Of course there are no instructions. So I made an appointment at my local Apple store. One of the Apple "geniuses" (yes they call them "geniuses") showed me all I had to do was to reboot the device. Hold two of the little fly-wheels down simultaneously for about ten seconds. Poof! It was as good as new. I read in Steve Jobs' biography that he believed his buyers should be able to "intuit" how to use each Apple product. No

big deal. Steve Jobs (God rest his soul) must have thought we are all geniuses to "intuit" this. I couldn't have figured out to press the two fly-wheels simultaneously in a hundred years or to save my life.

And my phone! My very adult kids said, "Dad you can't keep walking around with that snap-shut cell phone. It's out of date." So I got a smart phone. It took me three months to master how to use it so I didn't get heart palpitations every time the phone rang.

My conclusion: my smart phone's not so smart. For example, the screen goes dark at the most inopportune times. When I went to my Verizon retailer to ask them to remove that command, I was told, "Can't be done. It keeps your battery charged longer."

"So I'll charge my battery more often. My screen goes kaput just when I am being asked to provide my date of birth or some other ID information. Then it's a mess to catch up and not lose the call."

"Doesn't matter. It can't be done."

End of story. It makes me just shake my head in resignation at the cell company's rigidity.

I have a new car that is keyless. The sales person explained to me, "With this little fob in your pocket, you are the key. Don't need a key in the door to enter, operate, park or lock your vehicle."

After a while I got used to it. It's not bad, but I still reach for my key ring most times when I go to enter the car.

This auto also has a navigation system. It's nice to map out where I want to go to before a trip. Just follow the instructions as I drive. It also will take verbal commands so the telephone dialing remains hands-free. The problem is the device doesn't understand my New York or, maybe, Brooklyn accent. If I say distinctly and clearly, "Call home," it is likely to respond, "There is no listing for Call Rome." I think there may be a little announcer person under my front hood, curled up in a ball, solely for the purpose of tormenting me.

When I reflect on all these products, it becomes clear that these were not gradual advances that emerged over the last fifty years or so. Rather these all came in a rush, during the last ten or fifteen years. And they seem to be coming faster and faster.

I don't have the time or inclination to get into adventures with the PC and laptop. Who knows what new things are in the offing that will dazzle and confuse me?

But I'll have to keep trying. As the saying goes, *Growing old ain't for sissies*. One consolation is I won't have to keep groping around like this forever. I'd hate to be the next generation, and what

they'll have to put up with after my turn at bat.

If you would like to share with Groundcover readers your humorous experiences with new technologies, e-mail editor@groundcovernews.com. Your thoughts be will forwarded to me, and perhaps you'll find your anecdote in print.



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Book review: *The Devil's Highway*

by Luis Alberto Urrea
c. 2004 by Little, Brown & Co.

Review by David KE Dodge
Groundcover Contributor

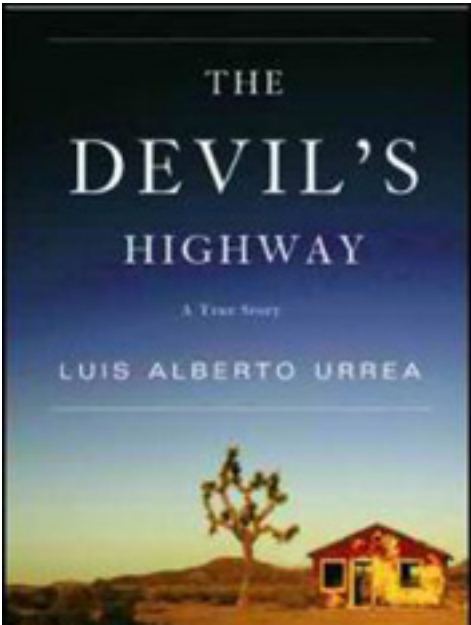
In this novel, Urrea relates the real-life events surrounding the death of 14 illegal immigrants from Mexico, and the rescue of 12 others, in the border deserts of Arizona in May of 2001.

By way of confession, I have been charged by more than one person of having a “Leftish” political bias. That accusation may be true, but there has been considerable room for me to travel Leftward since my young teen years, when I was a Goldwater enthusiast, and prayed to God that he spare the United States from being politically overwhelmed by overpopulation by partisans of the Welfare constituency.

Just in recent months, I recall viewing PBS interviews about the disaster of illegal immigration on my nation’s southern border, and responding to what I heard with angry indignation: *THEY ARE VIOLATING OUR LAWS*. And when I learned that some US citizens had organized themselves into groups that entered the U.S. deserts bordering on Mexico and left bottles of water at human trafficking routes, with hope that some lives might be saved, I felt despair at their defiance of U.S. interests.

Before I started reading this book, though, I had no idea how powerful Urrea’s presentation would be.

Urrea’s strategy was to describe the lives of specific men and women in the Mexican state of Veracruz whose ambitions seem innocent enough: to educate a son to the level of the 8th grade; to put a roof on a family’s house; to feed the children. Urrea describes the communities of friendships and



extended families, bound by love and loyalty, and sharing common poverty. He quickly puts the reader – me – in a position to feel empathy for them. I don’t want my country taken over by illegal immigrants, but surely these few can be helped – surely the United States can find a place for *them*.

Urrea puts a human face on the huddled poor of Veracruz; he also puts faces less pleasant to behold on the operatives of the shady crime syndicates that see opportunity in the U.S. crack-

down on immigration from Mexico. Ruthless men, who promise deliverance to a job in a U.S. city; deliverance, that is, at a dear price – months or years of work just paying off the debt incurred to the syndicate in being delivered. Deliverance at a price which, if not paid, would be collected in the coinage of the lives of loved ones left behind in Veracruz.

At the description of the simple turning of their lives over to the mercy of the merciless, my empathy for the Mexican émigrés turned to somber apprehension – hope for the hopeless. Urrea’s subjects face too many enemies.

Urrea puts a face on more than just good and evil humans. He uses his book to put a face – an inhuman one – on a form of death that no being should suffer: being cooked alive by unrelenting desert sun. This book is not for the squeamish.

Urrea also puts a face on U.S. law enforcement, especially the Border Patrol. By reading, the reader is confronted with heart-rending conflict – which brought to my mind a fact that I am constantly recalling: U.S. public institutions in general, at all levels, constantly call upon their public servants to confront all manner

of human suffering, fully realizing that the confrontation is essential to maintaining a high quality of living for the prosperous as well as tending to the needs of the desperate poor.

In the case of the Border Patrol, the same men who casually refer to the illegal immigrants who come into their lives as “tonks” (for the sound that is made when a flashlight is brought down on their heads), are the same men who dig into their own pockets to build high beacons in the wilderness which, if reached by a dying “tonk,” provide a button which, if pushed, will bring help, water, as well as arrest, in less than an hour. (Bear in mind that, for the purpose of “processing,” a dead body lying for years in a desert is considerably more convenient, and considerably less expensive, than rescue.)

So many faces, and all with their own motivations: numerous law enforcement agencies; politicians both north and south of the border; vigilantes; humanitarian organizations... Urrea depicts them all, and offers, perhaps as an antidote to despair, a refreshing thread of humor.

The Ann Arbor District Library has one copy.



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Tolerance implies no lack of commitment to one’s own beliefs. Rather it condemns the oppression or persecution of others.
--John F. Kennedy

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From homeless camp to college

by Alonzo Young
Groundcover Contributor

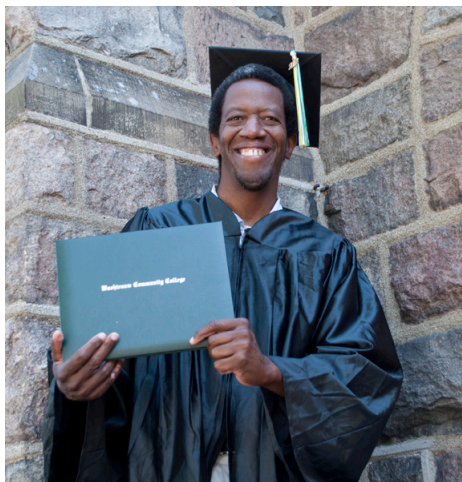
My name is Alonzo Young, and I'm the first resident of Camp Take Notice to graduate from college. I pursued my Associate's Degree in humanities and social sciences from Washtenaw Community College. I commuted to school by bus. I was on the executive committee of CTN, on the MISSION Board, and also the head security guard at the camp.

I used to live in the Delonis shelter. I always told people in the shelter that I was going back to school. I told them that I wanted to be a social worker. I loved working with people who need help. I want to be a teacher. I love working with kids.

One of the people from the Delonis Center recommended I go down to the camp, and one of the people who was very helpful to me when I got to the camp was Caleb Poirer. I joined the executive committee and worked on security. Helping people out in the camp made me more responsible. I helped people who had problems, took them to different rehab centers. I would miss class. I didn't care what time of day. And I benefitted from doing that.

It was hard at times, but I never gave up. I had short-term goals, I had long-term goals. God was always first in my life. My family was always my big support. I am also a volunteer at different churches in the community and I do volunteer work at the Kiwanis. I've been there for two years.

My aunt, Ethel Smith, was very helpful to me. When it got cold sometimes, I stayed at her house. She is a great person to be around. My cousins, Anita,



Alonzo Young earned his Associates Degree while living at Camp Take Notice.

Nancy, Ann, and Ricky Smith, and Debbie Cooper, used to come pick me up if I needed to go places. My mom, Ruth Henderson, was important in my life, too, because she told me never to give up. I would like to thank these additional people for helping me: Peggy Lynch, Jack Wagner, Lotus Yu, Glen, Levi, Caleb Poirer, Katie, Carolyn Lusch, Tate Williams, Diane Trosh, and Kim Gross.

It is hard to see Camp Take Notice go. Things happen for a reason. I did my job to see that the camp was run right while I was there. I hope that this camp will find a new location. I will always be there for the camp.

I got an award from WCC for being a successful student. I will be going back to school for a social work program.

If you're in this predicament, always put God in your life, try to do better in your life. I'm a role model to younger kids. Anybody can be homeless. Everybody has the opportunity to do better in life. Try to better yourself and you will succeed.

Baked Tomatoes

by Kevin Sharp
People's Food Co-op Manager

4 ripe, flavorful tomatoes
2 tablespoons olive oil, plus more for drizzling
3/4 cup Panko bread crumbs
1/4 cup freshly grated Parmigiano-Reggiano (or Parmesan) cheese
1 teaspoon or so each chopped fresh parsley, basil and oregano
1 clove garlic, minced
salt and pepper to taste

Preheat oven to 375°F. In a small bowl, toss together the Panko bread crumbs, Parmigiano Reggiano, herbs, garlic and salt and pepper. Add the 2 tablespoons of olive oil and stir to fully incorporate the oil into the dry mixture. Slice the tomatoes in half crosswise and discard seeds. Drizzle each with a bit more olive oil, then fill with the bread crumb mixture. Place the tomato halves in a baking dish and bake for 20 minutes, or until the bread crumbs are golden brown. Serve warm from the oven.

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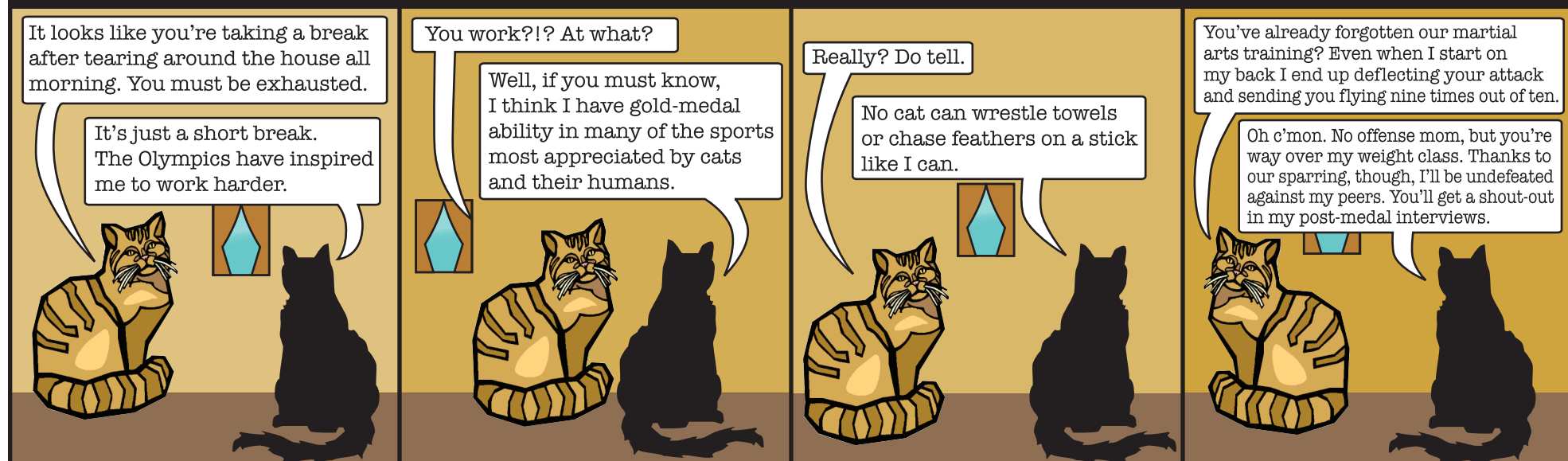
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